

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of various of the claims in the captioned application is respectfully requested pursuant to the provisions of Rule 116.

Initially, Applicant's attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of the allowability of the subject matter of Claims 2-3 and 13-14 as well as the allowance of Claims 20 and 21. Claims 2 and 13 have been rewritten into independent claim form so that they are presently allowable.

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to more clearly bring out the fact that there are multiple movements of the elements of the apparatus to effect the bending of the sheet metal. In addition to the vertical movement of the lifter assembly in its entirety, the separator frame is pivotable upwardly relative to the lifter frame to effect bending of the one side of the workpiece. At least one separator section vacuum holder is movable upwardly relative to the fixed stop which is also mounted on the separator frame so as to effect bending movement of the one side of the workpiece, thereby facilitating the separation of that uppermost workpiece from other workpieces in the stack.

No such action is shown or suggested in the prior art. The Examiner recognizes this deficiency in Shiiki, and relies upon Croyle et al for providing a stop cooperating with a suction

holder, but that reliance is misplaced. The element 140 is mounted on a pivotable element, but the stop 160 is certainly not mounted on that pivotable element. There is nothing that teaches or suggests the structure of Applicant's invention, wherein two separate bending motions are being effected by the separator frame and by the combination of the stop and movable suction holder on that frame.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1 and 12 as amended are allowable as are the claims dependent thereon.

Please charge the filing fee of Thirty-Six Dollars (\$36.00) for the two additional independent claims to the deposit account of Pepe & Hazard LLP, account number 03-3355.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the final rejection of the several claims and allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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